

mtDNA Polymorphism in East Asian Populations, with Special Reference to the Peopling of Japan

Satoshi Horai,¹ Kumiko Murayama,¹ Kenji Hayasaka,¹ Satoe Matsubayashi,¹ Yuko Hattori,¹ Goonnappa Fucharoen,² Shinji Harihara,³ Kyung Sook Park,⁴ Keiichi Omoto,⁵ and I-Hung Pan⁶

¹Department of Human Genetics, National Institute of Genetics, Mishima, Shizuoka, Japan; ²Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand;

³Department of Anthropology, Graduate School of Science, University of Tokyo, Tokyo; ⁴Department of Biology, Sung-Shin Women's University, Seoul; ⁵International Center for Japanese Studies, Kyoto; and ⁶National Taiwan University, Taipei

Summary

Nucleotide sequences of the major noncoding (D-loop) region of human mtDNA from five East Asian populations including mainland Japanese, Ainu, Ryukyans, Koreans, and Chinese were analyzed. On the basis of a comparison of 482-bp sequences in 293 East Asians, 207 different sequence types were observed. Of these, 189 were unique to their respective populations, whereas 18 were shared between two or three populations. Among the shared types, eight were found in common between the mainland Japanese and Koreans, which is the largest number in the comparison. The intergenic COII/tRNA^{Lys} 9-bp deletion was observed in every East Asian population with varying frequencies. The D-loop sequence variation suggests that the deletion event occurred only once in the ancestry of East Asians. Phylogenetic analysis revealed that East Asian lineages were classified into at least 18 monophyletic clusters, though lineages from the five populations were completely intermingled in the phylogenetic tree. However, we assigned 14 of the 18 clusters for their specificity on the basis of the population from which the maximum number of individuals in each cluster was derived. Of note is the finding that 50% of the mainland Japanese had continental specificity in which Chinese or Koreans were dominant, while <20% of either Ryukyans or Ainu possessed continental specificity. Phylogenetic analysis of the entire human population revealed the closest genetic affinity between the mainland Japanese and Koreans. Thus, the results of this study are compatible with the hybridization model on the origin of modern Japanese. It is suggested that ~65% of the gene pool in mainland Japanese was derived from the continental gene flow after the Yayoi Age.

Introduction

There have been at least two major migration events that brought immigrants from the Asian continent to the Japanese archipelago. The Jomon people arrived in Japan >12,000 years ago, although the exact timing and geographic origin of this migration event are still puzzling (Turner 1990; Nei 1995). The Yayoi people, originally from northeast Asia, started migrating to Japan from the Korean peninsula ~2,300 years ago. One of major issues in the Japanese prehistory is concerned with the extent to which the aboriginal Jomon and the more recently migrating Yayoi contributed genetically to modern Japanese populations (Chard 1974, p. 114). There are two contemporary ethnic groups that appear to be distinct from the mainland Japanese populations living on the centrally located islands of Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. They are the Ainu, inhabiting the northern island of Hokkaido, and the Ryukyans, living in the southernmost island of Okinawa. There is some agreement that these two groups represent modern descendants of the aboriginal people of the Neolithic Jomon Age (Hanihara 1991; Omoto 1992; Kozintsev 1993).

There are several theories on the origins of modern Japanese populations, some of which were proposed >100 years ago (reviewed by Mizoguchi 1986). These theories attempt to explain a fairly large range of morphological, cultural, and genetic variation represented in modern Japanese populations and recognized in archaeological and fossil evidence. Currently, hypotheses can be classified into two major groups: hybridization and transformation theories. Hybridization theories claim that modern Japanese are the result of an admixture between different immigrant populations and predict that modern Japanese have genes deriving from both the Jomon and Yayoi people. One of the hybridization theories is the so-called dual structure model for the population history of Japanese (Hanihara 1987, 1991, 1992). In this hypothesis, the elemental population involved in the formation of the Japanese population may have been the Jomon people, who are supposed to have originated in Southeast Asia. Migrants after the Yayoi Age, whose homeland was probably in northeast Asia,

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Address for correspondence and reprints: Dr. Satoshi Horai, Department of Human Genetics, National Institute of Genetics, Yata 1,111, Mishima, Shizuoka, 411 Japan. E-mail: shorai@lab.nig.ac.jp

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gradually mixed with the preexistent Jomon people in Japan. On the other hand, most transformation theories posit that the people of Japan gradually evolved from a single ancient population that migrated from southern China at the end of Pleistocene (Hasebe 1940; Suzuki 1969). They formed the Jomon people, who occupied the entire archipelago of Japan during the Jomon Age (12,000–2,300 years ago). The Jomon people then gradually transformed their morphological characteristics to form the modern Japanese, who are now living on the main islands of Japan (Suzuki 1981; Mizoguchi 1986). In this theory, migrants after the Yayoi Age might have contributed culturally but not genetically to the formation of modern Japanese. However, these theories on the origins of the modern Japanese were primarily based on morphological evidence. Therefore, it is necessary to study the origin and formation of modern Japanese on the basis of genetic evidence (Hammer and Horai 1995; Nei 1995; Omoto 1995).

By virtue of its rapid rate of evolution and maternal mode of inheritance (Hutchison et al. 1974; Brown et al. 1979; Giles et al. 1980), mtDNA permits discrimination and quantification of genetic relationships among closely related individuals. Restriction enzyme analysis of mtDNA has been a powerful tool in attempts to quantify evolutionary relationships among human ethnic groups (Horai et al. 1986; Cann et al. 1987; Wallace 1995 and references therein). Although restriction enzyme analyses represent polymorphisms over the whole mitochondrial genome, some ambiguities remain with respect to the actual number of nucleotide differences and the estimation of genetic distances (Kocher et al. 1989). In recent mtDNA analyses, it has become popular to employ direct sequencing by means of a PCR. The target is a major noncoding (D-loop) region of mtDNA that has apparently evolved several times faster than other parts (Vigilant et al. 1989, 1991; Horai and Haya-saka 1990; Horai et al. 1991, 1993; Di Rienzo and Wilson 1991). Sequence analysis of this region therefore offers high resolution that discriminates among even very closely related individuals.

To investigate the peopling of Japan and to create the most appropriate model for the origins of modern Japanese, we examined the mtDNA sequence variation in the D-loop region from five East Asian populations: the mainland Japanese, Ryukyans, Ainu, Koreans, and Chinese. These results are discussed in light of sequence evolution and shared identical sequences among populations in East Asia. We also examined in detail the evolution of mtDNA sequences at the worldwide population level.

Material and Methods

Samples of East Asians

Blood samples were obtained from 66 Chinese in Taiwan, 64 Koreans in South Korea, 50 Ryukyans in Okinawa,

and 51 Ainu in Hokkaido. Many of the Chinese who inhabit Taiwan are known to be direct descendants of migrants from mainland China after the seventeenth century. Moreover, the present Chinese samples do not include those from Taiwanese aboriginal populations who show linguistic and physical affinity to the Austronesian-speaking populations of Southeast Asia (Bellwood et al. 1995). For the Ainu subjects, restriction enzyme analysis of the same samples was reported by Harihara et al. (1988). Genomic DNA was prepared from the buffy coat in blood through treatment with SDS and proteinase K and subsequent phenol/chloroform extraction.

Direct Sequencing of PCR Products

A fragment of mtDNA was amplified by means of the PCR method described by Saiki et al. (1988). A set of nonbiotinylated and 5'-biotinylated primers (A and E primers; see below) were designed to amplify a DNA fragment from the D-loop region of mtDNA. PCR was carried out under the following thermal cycle conditions: incubation at 94°C for 15 s, 45°C for 15 s, 72°C for 30 s, for a total of 30 cycles. To generate single-stranded template DNAs from PCR products, the PCR products were mixed with magnetic beads (Dynabeads M-280 Streptavidin; Dynal). Both strands were then prepared as single-stranded DNAs by using alkali denaturation and magnetic separation as described in the manufacturer's protocol and employed as templates for sequencing reactions. The following oligonucleotide primers were designed for amplification and sequencing: A: 16011-5'-AACTATTCTCTGTTCTTTC-3'-16030; B: 16204-5'-AGCAAGTACAGCAATCAACC-3'-16223; C: 16403-5'-CCATCCTCCGTGAAATCAAT-3'-16423; D: 60-5'-AAAATACCAAATGCATGGAG-3'-41; E: 181-5'-TAATATTGAACGTAGGTGCG-3'-162. (The notation of Anderson et al. (1981) is used for numbering of bases.)

Detection of the COII/tRNA^{Lys} Intergenic Deletion

A set of oligonucleotide primers was designed as follows, to amplify a COII/tRNA^{Lys} intergenic region of mtDNA: 8211-5'-TCGTCCTAGAATTAATTCCC-3'-8230 and 8310-5'-AGTTAGCTTTACAGTGGGCT-3'-8291. The amplified fragments were separated by electrophoresis on 4% agarose gels and detected fluorographically after staining with ethidium bromide.

Data Analyses

The number of nucleotide substitutions per site between individual sequences was estimated using the two-parameter model of nucleotide substitutions (Kimura 1980). On the basis of the estimated number of nucleotide substitutions, phylogenetic trees were constructed using the neighbor-joining (NJ) method (Saitou and Nei 1987) and the unweighted pair-group method with arithmetic mean (UPGMA) (Nei 1987).

Table 1**Unique and Common mtDNA Sequence Types Observed in Five East Asian Populations**

POPULATION	NO. OF INDIVIDUALS	NO. OF SEQUENCE TYPES	NO. OF UNIQUE TYPES (% individuals) ^a	NO. OF COMMON TYPES SHARED BETWEEN	
				Two Populations (counterpart) ^b	Three Populations (companion) ^c
Chinese	66	58	54 (94)	3 (K2, A1)	1 (c)
Korean	64	49	36 (64)	9 (J5, C2, R1, A1)	4 (a, b, c, d)
Mainland Japanese	62	53	41 (71)	9 (K5, A3, R1)	3 (a, b, d)
Ryukyuan	50	44	40 (86)	2 (J1, K1)	2 (a, b)
Ainu	51	25	18 (67)	5 (J3, K1, C1)	2 (c, d)

^a Percent number of individuals who possess unique types in each population.^b Single capital letters refer to abbreviations of population as follows: C = Chinese; K = Korean; J = mainland Japanese; R = Ryukyuan; and A = Ainu. Numbers of common types are indicated by suffixes to abbreviations of population.^c Four common types are shared by three populations and designated a through d. Populations appeared in each type are also given by single capital letter abbreviations as follows: a and b: KRJ; c: KAC; d: JAK.

Results and Discussion

Sequence Differences and Identities in East Asians

We determined the nucleotide sequence of a 482-bp fragment of the D-loop region (positions 16129–16569 followed by positions 1–41 in the reference sequence of Anderson et al. 1981) for 231 East Asians from four local populations (Koreans, Chinese, Ainu, and Ryukyuan). Together with the published sequence data for 62 mainland Japanese from Shizuoka Prefecture in central Japan (Horai and Hayasaka 1990; Horai et al. 1991), a total of 293 sequences from East Asians were analyzed. There were 207 distinct types of sequences in total. Of these, 189 were unique to their respective populations, whereas 14 were shared between two populations and 4 were found in common among three populations. The number of these sequence types and of unique types observed in the five Asian populations are shown in table 1. The smaller number of sequence types observed in the Ainu was a result of the many identical sequences in that population. In fact, the most frequent sequence type was shared by eight Ainu individuals, and the second most frequent type was observed in seven individuals of the Ainu. Among 14 sequence types shared between two populations, 5 were found in common between the Koreans and mainland Japanese, 3 between the mainland Japanese and Ainu, 2 between the Chinese and Koreans, and 1 each in four population pairs: the Chinese and Ainu, the Koreans and Ryukyuan, the Korean and Ainu, and the mainland Japanese and Ryukyuan. We identified four types shared among three populations. There were two different types shared among the Koreans, mainland Japanese, and Ryukyuan. Two others were found in common among the Chinese, Koreans, and Ainu and among the Koreans, mainland Japanese and Ainu, respectively.

The number of shared types observed between each pair of two populations is summarized and shown in figure 1. It should be noted that the mainland Japanese and Koreans have eight different sequence types in common, and these types were shared between 14 mainland Japanese (23% of the population) and 17 Koreans (27% of the population). The mainland Japanese also share four sequence types with the Ainu, while the number of shared types is less than three in the rest of the comparisons between two populations. As shown in figure 1, 10 Ainu shared three common types with four Koreans.

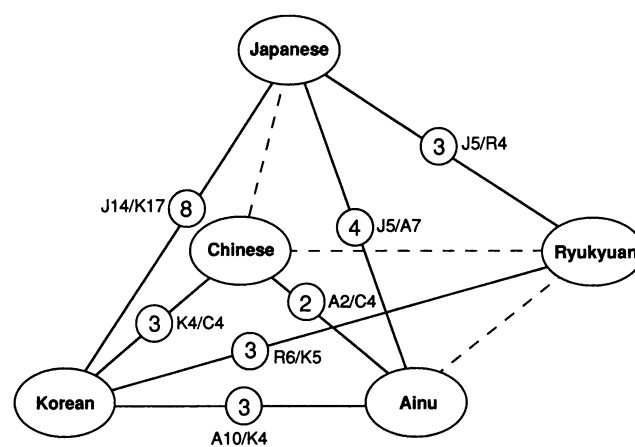


Figure 1 Number of shared types observed between each pair of two populations. The figure in a circle on the solid line connecting two populations is the number of shared types. Pairs of populations that have no shared types are shown by dashed lines. Single capital letters refer to the abbreviations of population as follows: C = Chinese; K = Korean; J = mainland Japanese; R = Ryukyuan; and A = Ainu. The figures following the population abbreviation shown beside the circles are total number of individuals sharing types from the respective two populations.

However, this does not necessarily indicate a close relationship between the Ainu and Koreans, since one of the three common types happened to be shared by eight Ainu and only one Korean. It is worth noting that the Ainu and Ryukyans did not possess any sequence types in common, though these two populations are considered to be direct descendants of the Jomon people (discussed in Relationships between the Ainu and Ryukyans).

In addition to the above East Asian data, we analyzed identical sequence pairs together with sequence data for 23 Africans (Horai and Hayasaka 1990; Vigilant 1990), 20 Europeans (Horai and Hayasaka 1990), and 72 Amerinds (Horai et al. 1993). Each of three human populations exhibited unique sequences and did not show any shared sequence types with other populations (data not shown). The presence of shared sequence types between two populations should reflect either a closer genetic relationship or recent migrations between the two populations. Since, in terms of shared types, the Ainu and Ryukyans (descendants of the aboriginal Jomon people) showed a lesser degree of genetic affinity to the Koreans than did the mainland Japanese, one explanation may be that a relatively large number of common types observed between mainland Japanese and Koreans may have resulted from recent migrations via the Korean peninsula.

Phylogeny of mtDNA Sequences

The 482-bp sequences from a total of 293 individuals from East Asia were aligned and compared, and the number of nucleotide substitutions between each pair of sequences was estimated. Nucleotide diversity among the 293 East Asian was estimated to be 1.34%, which is three to four times higher than the corresponding value estimated from restriction enzyme analysis of the entire mtDNA genome (Brown 1980; Horai et al. 1986; Cann et al. 1987). By using the estimated number of nucleotide substitutions between individual sequences, a phylogenetic tree was constructed using the NJ method (Saitou and Nei 1987), as shown in figure 2. On the basis of branching patterns in the tree, sequences were classified into 18 monophyletic clusters, which are shown by brackets with clustering numbers (C1–C18). To ensure robustness of these clusters, we examined shared polymorphic sites within each cluster, as shown in table 2. The majority of members in each cluster shared a specific combination of two to five polymorphic sites, with exceptions of members in C3 and C13, who shared only one polymorphic site. A C-to-T transition at 16223 (nucleotide position in the reference sequence of Anderson et al. 1981) was shared by most members (212 of the 217 individuals) in clusters C5 through C18, while this polymorphism was virtually absent in clusters C1 through C4. Furthermore, in some clusters, all members exhibited a specific polymorphism that was virtu-

ally absent in other clusters. For example, a T-to-C transition at 16304 was observed in all members of C4, which was unique to this cluster and was completely absent in other clusters. Unique polymorphisms were also seen in ≥ 10 other clusters. Therefore, it is likely that most of the clusters could reflect their ancestral states of lineage divergence. However, it is apparent that lineages from the five Asian populations were completely intermingled in the phylogenetic tree, though individuals from single populations dominated in some of the clusters.

To evaluate the features of clustering patterns further, the composition of the 18 clusters and geographic distribution of the 293 East Asian lineages were summarized, as shown in table 3. Although the numbers of individuals sampled from the five populations were not the same, we assigned "specificity" for each cluster on the basis of the population from which the maximum number of individuals was derived. In this way, we were able to assign specificity for 14 of the 18 clusters. Although this assignment of specificity seems to be somewhat arbitrary, the rule for assignment is a simple "majority-rules" voting procedure. Furthermore, it may be useful for understanding the relationships of mtDNA sequences among very closely related human populations such as East Asians because ancient migrations between adjacent geographic areas are anticipated. For example, in C1, 10 Ainu individuals appeared together with only 3 members each from the mainland Japanese, Koreans, and Chinese. We therefore named this cluster Ainu-1 (table 3). We could not assign specificity for four clusters, since there were the same number of individuals from more than two populations: they were C6, C7, C11, and C12. It is interesting to note that three individuals from mainland Japan were dominant only in a small cluster (C8), and most of the other Japanese were included under other specificity. However, Chinese exhibited four dominant clusters (C2, C4, C9, and C18) and Koreans did three (C5, C10, and C14). On the other hand, the Ainu exhibited two dominant clusters (C1 and C16), and the Ryukyans showed four dominant clusters (C3, C13, C15, and C17). Table 3 also shows the assigned specificity for the sum of individuals from each of five localities in East Asia. It is surprising that 25.8% of mainland Japanese showed Chinese specificity and 24.2% of them exhibited Korean specificity. Thus, 50% of mainland Japanese had continental specificity (both the Chinese and Koreans). By contrast, 9.8% of the Ainu showed both Chinese and Korean specificity. Ryukyans showed almost the same breakdown in specificity (10% Chinese and 8% Korean). It is relevant to note that one third (17 individuals) of the Ainu exhibited the two dominant clusters (C1 and C16), and 50% of the Ryukyans showed Ryukyuan specificity, indicating unique phylogenetic affiliation for the two ethnic groups of Japan.

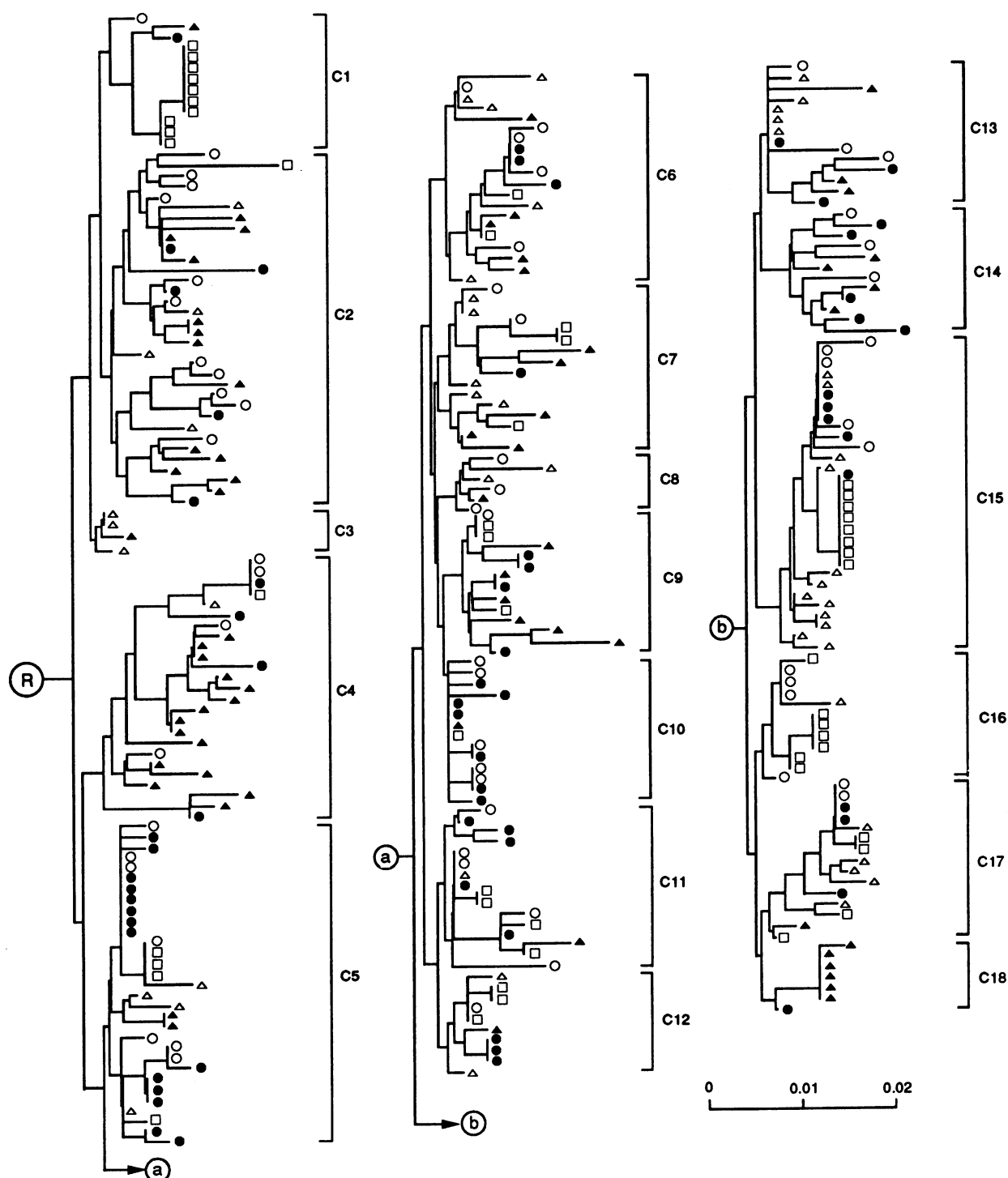


Figure 2 Phylogenetic tree of 293 mtDNA lines from five populations of East Asians. On the basis of clustering patterns in the tree, all lineages were classified into 18 monophyletic clusters, which are shown by brackets with cluster numbers C1–C18. The symbols at the tip of each branch indicate local populations: mainland Japanese (○), Ryukyuan (△), Ainu (□), Korean (●), and Chinese (▲). Nucleotide substitutions per site are indicated on the scale below the tree.

COII/tRNA^{Lys} Intergenic 9-bp Deletion

The presence of a 9-bp deletion in the *COII/tRNA^{Lys}* intergenic region of mtDNA is one of the characteristics not only of Asians (Horai and Matsunaga 1986; Horai et al. 1987; Stoneking and Wilson 1989; Horai 1991a,

1991b; Ballinger et al. 1992; Harihara et al. 1992; Pas-sarino et al. 1993) but also of populations of Asian origin, including Polynesians (Hertzberg et al. 1989; Haggelberg and Clegg 1993; Lum et al. 1994; Redd et al. 1995) and Native Americans (Schurr et al. 1990; Ward

Table 2

Shared Polymorphic Sites in the 18 Clusters

Cluster	No. of Lineages	Shared Polymorphic Sites within a Cluster ^a				
C1	13	16189:T→C(11)	16231:T→C(13)	16266:C→T(12)	16292:C→T(7)	16519:T→C(12)
C2	34	9-bp deletion(34)	16189:T→C(34)	16217:T→C(19)	16519:T→C(33)	...
C3	4	16519:T→C(4)	...	...	...	...
C4	25	16129:G→A(16)	16162:A→G(8)	16172:T→C(13)	16304:T→C(25)	16519:T→C(17)
C5	31	16223:C→T(31)	16362:T→C(18)	16519:T→C(30)	...	...
C6	20	16223:C→T(19)	16290:C→T(14)	16319:G→A(20)	...	...
C7	16	16223:C→T(16)	16278:C→T(10)	16362:T→C(14)	16227:A→G(6)	16234:C→T(7)
C8	6	16223:C→T(6)	16390:G→A(6)	16362:T→C(4)	16519:T→C(4)	...
C9	14	16223:C→T(14)	16311:T→C(14)	16362:T→C(14)	...	...
C10	14	16223:C→T(14)	16362:T→C(14)	...	...	...
C11	16	16189:T→C(14)	16223:C→T(14)	16362:T→C(16)	...	...
C12	10	16189:T→C(10)	16223:C→T(10)	16519:T→C(9)	...	...
C13	14	16223:C→T(14)	...	...	...	...
C14	12	16223:C→T(12)	16298:T→C(12)	16519:T→C(6)	...	...
C15	30	16209:T→C(21)	16223:C→T(28)	16324:T→C(29)	16291:C→T(10)	...
C16	12	16129:G→A(12)	16223:C→T(12)	16519:T→C(11)	...	...
C17	15	16129:G→A(14)	16189:T→C(12)	16223:C→T(15)	16297:T→C(10)	16298:T→C(11)
C18	7	16129:G→A(7)	16223:C→T(7)	16192:C→T(7)	16297:T→C(6)	...

^a Each polymorphic site corresponds to the following site and replacement in the reference sequence reported by Anderson et al. (1981). Number in parenthesis represents number of lineages that exhibited the polymorphism.

et al. 1991, 1993; Shields et al. 1992, 1993; Torroni et al. 1992; Horai et al. 1993). However, some studies have suggested multiple origins for the deletion in Asia (Schurr et al. 1990; Ballinger et al. 1992; Torroni et al. 1994; Redd et al. 1995). We screened the present 293 East Asians from five localities for the 9-bp deletion. The frequency of the 9-bp deletion was 20% for Chinese, 18% for mainland Japanese, 8% for Koreans, 8% for Ryukyans, and 2% for Ainu. A total of 34 East Asians exhibited the 9-bp deletion, and all of them were included in the C2 cluster in the phylogenetic tree based on D-loop sequences (fig. 2). This indicates that the deletion event occurred once in the ancestry of East Asian lineages. Furthermore, since there were at least five sub-clusters in C2 and the nucleotide diversity within C2 was the highest (table 3), the deletion event appears to have occurred a relatively long time ago. Recently, Horai et al. (1995) analyzed complete mtDNA sequences from three humans (African, European, and Japanese) and four species of hominoids in order to infer modern human origins. On the basis of these data for humans, we estimated the substitution rate for the 482-bp segment as 8.6×10^{-8} /site/year. The average divergence for the coalescence of the cluster containing the 9-bp deletion was 1.285% (table 3). Assuming the average rate of the D-loop sequence substitution of 8.6×10^{-8} /site/year yields a mean estimate of 75,000 years for the coalescence of the 9-bp deletion cluster.

mtDNA Polymorphism and the Peopling of Japan

As mentioned in the Introduction, there are two major hypotheses on the origins of mainland Japanese. Pat-

terns of mtDNA sequence variation can be used to test these hypotheses from the perspective of maternal lineages. On the basis of the analysis of identical sequence pairs shared between populations, it was revealed that the mainland Japanese had sequence types in common more frequently with Koreans than with the Ainu and Ryukyans (table 1 and fig. 1). Furthermore, on the basis of clustering analysis in the phylogenetic tree, it can be inferred that the continental specificity in mainland Japanese (50%) were much more abundant than for either the Ainu or Ryukyans (average value 19%). These findings indicate that a great quantity of maternal lineages was introduced into Japan by immigrants from the Korean peninsula after the Yayoi Age. These results lend support to the hybridization theory on the origin of mainland Japanese. The transformation theory contends that genetic variation in mainland Japanese derives solely from their Jomon ancestors and does not reflect a Yayoi admixture (Suzuki 1981; Mizoguchi 1986). Since the mtDNA sequence polymorphism found indicates that the mainland Japanese have been considerably influenced by a continental gene flow, the transformation theory obviously is incompatible with the present results. Recently, Nei (1995) used evidence from a survey of 18 protein polymorphic loci in mainland Japanese, Ainu, Ryukyans, and their surrounding populations to question the validity of the hybridization theory of Japanese origins. A phylogenetic tree indicated that the Ainu and Ryukyans are closest to each other and are also closely allied with the mainland Japanese and Koreans. However, the three Japanese populations were

Table 3

Composition of the 18 Clusters, and Geographic Distribution of 293 East Asian Lineages

CLUSTER	SPECIFICITY	NO. OF LINEAGES FROM					NUCLEOTIDE DIVERSITY (%)
		Mainland Japan	Okinawa	Hokkaido Ainu	Korea	Taiwan Chinese	
C1	Ainu-1	1	0	10	1	1	.357
C2	Chinese-1	11	4	1	5	13	1.285
C3	Ryukyuan-1	0	3	0	0	1	.207
C4	Chinese-2	4	1	1	4	15	1.275
C5	Korean-1	7	4	4	14	2	.514
C6	Unassigned-1	5	5	2	3	5	.716
C7	Unassigned-2	2	5	3	1	5	1.204
C8	Japanese-1	3	2	0	0	1	.542
C9	Chinese-3	1	0	3	4	6	.743
C10	Korean-2	5	0	1	7	1	.309
C11	Unassigned-3	5	1	4	5	1	.703
C12	Unassigned-4	1	2	3	3	1	.407
C13	Ryukyuan-2	3	5	0	3	3	.739
C14	Korean-3	3	0	0	5	4	1.009
C15	Ryukyuan-3	5	12	8	5	0	.403
C16	Ainu-2	4	1	7	0	0	.352
C17	Ryukyuan-4	2	5	4	3	1	.618
C18	Chinese-4	0	0	0	1	6	.178
Total		62	50	51	64	66	1.336
Sum of specificity:							
Chinese		16 (25.8)	5 (10.0)	5 (9.8)	14 (21.9)	40 (60.6)	
Korean		15 (24.2)	4 (8.0)	5 (9.8)	26 (40.6)	7 (10.6)	
Japanese		3 (4.8)	2 (4.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.5)	
Ainu		5 (8.1)	1 (2.0)	17 (33.3)	1 (1.6)	1 (1.5)	
Ryukyuan		10 (16.1)	25 (50.0)	12 (23.5)	11 (17.4)	5 (7.6)	
Unassigned		13 (21.0)	13 (26.0)	12 (23.5)	12 (18.8)	12 (18.2)	

NOTE.—Numbers in parentheses are percentages.

quite distinct from contemporary Southeast Asians in the phylogenetic tree. This does not support a hypothesis based on morphological characteristics, which states the ancestors of the Ainu and Ryukyuan (Jomon people) are the direct descendants of Paleolithic Southeast Asians (Turner 1976, 1990; Hanihara 1991). Nei (1995) favors a modification of the transformation theory (called the “out-of-northeast-Asia hypothesis”) that posits: (1) modern human first entered into Japan ~30,000 years ago from northeast Asia; (2) an occasional gene flow from northeast Asia continued until 12,000 years ago, when the Japanese archipelago disconnected from the Asian continent; and (3) the Yayoi migration, while making a large cultural contribution, had little influence on the gene pool of modern Japanese.

The mtDNA polymorphisms discussed in this paper provide a maternally based test of one aspect (3) of the out-of-northeast-Asia hypothesis. It is possible to estimate the proportion of mtDNAs derived from the Yayoi migration if it is assumed that present-day frequencies of continental specificity in Ainu/Okinawa and Korea/China are similar to frequencies in the Jomon and Yayoi populations, respectively (Reed 1969). Assuming

that population mixture is the only process affecting the system, if q_{AO} is the frequency of continental specificity in Jomon ancestor of modern Japanese (19%; see table 3), q_{KC} is the frequency of continental specificity in the Yayoi ancestors (67%), and q_M is the frequency of continental specificity in mainland Japanese (50%), then M is the present proportion of mtDNAs derived from the Yayoi:

$$M = \frac{q_M - q_{AO}}{q_{KC} - q_{AO}}.$$

Substitution of the frequencies of continental specificity into this equation yields the following results: the proportion of mtDNAs derived from the Yayoi is 65%, and the proportion derived from the Jomon is 35%. Therefore, the mtDNA data support the hybridization hypothesis that migrations during the Yayoi Age (2,300—1,700 years ago) and the subsequent Kofun period (1,700—1,400 years ago) made a significant maternal contribution to the gene pool of modern Japanese (Yamaguchi 1982; Hammer and Horai 1995).

Relationships between the Ainu and Ryukyuan

The present mtDNA data lend support to the hybridization theory. As mentioned above, after the Yayoi Age a great quantity of migrations to Japan occurred from the Asian continent. It has been thought that people migrated first into the western part (Kyushu island) of Japan and gradually moved into the Honshu island and mixed with the preexistent Jomon people (Hanihara 1991). However, there is an idea that the migrants pushed the Jomon people into the northern and southern parts of Japan (Nei 1995). This idea assumes that the present Ainu living in Hokkaido are descendants of the Jomon people who were forced to move northward, while the Ryukyuan living in Okinawa are Jomon descendants who moved south. If this is the case, the present Ainu and Ryukyuan began to diverge from a single Jomon population just after the Yayoi migration. As shown in table 1, the Ainu and Ryukyuan did not possess any sequence types in common, though a total of 18 sequence types were shared among other populations of East Asia. As mentioned above, we estimated the substitution rate for the 482-bp segment as 8.6×10^{-8} /site/year. Applying this rate, we estimated a minimum coalescence time (T in years) when given two sequences that differ by 1 nt in the 482-bp region in the following:

$$T = 1/(482 \times 2 \times 8.6 \times 10^{-8}) = 12,064 \text{ years}.$$

Since all pairwise comparisons of mtDNA sequences between the Ainu and Ryukyuan showed that minimum nucleotide differences were 1, the present Ainu and Ryukyuan populations should have been separated from each other for as long as 12,000 years, if the above coalescence time is valid. The results strongly suggest that ancestral populations for the present Ainu and Ryukyuan must have existed as different populations when the Yayoi migration took place $\sim 2,300$ years ago. Analysis of shared sequence types showed that the Ryukyuan shared one type each with the mainland Japanese and Koreans, and two types each with both the mainland Japanese and Koreans (table 1). In contrast, the Ainu shared three types with the mainland Japanese and one type each with Koreans and Chinese. Furthermore, the common types shared among three populations observed in the Ainu and Ryukyuan are different. These results imply that, in the Yayoi Age, some ancestral Ryukyuan might have stayed in the western part of Japan, whereas the ancestral Ainu population already was inhabiting Hokkaido, even if some of the Ainu and Ryukyuan descended from a common ancestral Jomon stock. Differences between the Ainu and Ryukyuan are also conspicuous from the phylogenetic analysis. In the clustering analysis (table 3), the Ainu exhibited two dominant clusters (C1 and C16), of which 17 (33%) of the 51 Ainu subjects were included in the two clusters. In

C1, however, no Ryukyuan appeared, while there were three lineages each from mainland Japanese, Chinese, and Korean. In C16, only one Ryukyuan appeared together with seven Ainu and four mainland Japanese. These results suggest that the Ryukyuan with Ainu specificity are quite rare. On the other hand, four Ryukyuan dominant clusters were assigned: they were C3, C13, C15, and C17. In both C3 and C13, a total of eight Ryukyuan appeared, together with three mainland Japanese, three Koreans, and four Chinese but no Ainu. However, in both C15 and C17, a total of 17 Ryukyuan (34% of the population) existed together with 12 Ainu (24% of the population), 7 mainland Japanese, 3 Koreans, and 1 Chinese. This indicates a closer genetic relationship between the Ryukyuan and Ainu who were included in groups having Ryukyuan specificity. These results lend some degree of support to the hypothesis that the Ainu and Ryukyuan exhibited closer genetic affinity as the direct descendants of the Jomon people. However, since the divergence between the Ainu and Ryukyuan populations is assumed to have taken place as long as 12,000 years ago and that only part of the Ainu and Ryukyuan share a common ancestry, it is unlikely that the ancestral populations of both the Ainu and Ryukyuan existed as a single panmictic Jomon population when the Yayoi migrations began to take place.

Nucleotide Diversity and Phylogeny in the Entire Human Population

To infer the phylogenetic positions of the five East Asian populations in the entire human population, we analyzed mtDNA sequence data for the five Asian populations together with the published data for Africans (Horai and Hayasaka 1990; Vigilant 1991), Europeans (Horai and Hayasaka 1990), and Amerinds (Horai et al. 1993). We estimated intrapopulation (d_X or d_Y), interpopulation (d_{XY}), and net (d_A) nucleotide diversity among the eight human populations (table 4). In the East Asian populations, values of nucleotide diversity within population (d_X) were 1.65% for Chinese, 1.22% for Korean, 1.32% for Japanese, 1.01% for Ryukyuan, and 1.26% for Ainu. Among all East Asians, nucleotide diversity was estimated at 1.34%, which is slightly larger than that in Amerinds (1.29%). The nucleotide diversity was the highest within Africans (2.08%) and lowest within Europeans (0.95%). Furthermore, nucleotide diversity within African was larger than that of interpopulation diversity, with the exception observed between African and Chinese. Thus, the earlier finding that, compared with Europeans and Asians, Africans have highly diversified mtDNAs, which were deduced from restriction-enzyme analysis (Horai et al. 1986; Cann et al. 1987) and extensive D-loop sequence analysis for Africans reported by Vigilant et al. (1991), was confirmed by quantitative analysis of the nucleotide sequences

Table 4**Estimates of Interpopulational (d_{xy}), Intrapopulational (d_x or d_y), and Net (d_A) Nucleotide Diversities among Eight Human Populations**

Population	African (N = 23)	European (N = 20)	Chinese (N = 66)	Korean (N = 64)	Japanese (N = 62)	Ryukyuan (N = 50)	Ainu (N = 51)	Amerind (N = 72)
African	2.081	1.829	2.100	1.883	1.917	1.802	1.901	2.054
European	.312	.953	1.417	1.259	1.294	1.154	1.289	1.437
Chinese	.234	.115	1.652	1.472	1.509	1.393	1.520	1.646
Korean	.234	.174	.037	1.218	1.269	1.129	1.282	1.375
Mainland Japanese	.216	.157	.022	.000	1.321	1.184	1.322	1.415
Ryukyuan	.258	.174	.063	.017	.019	1.008	1.181	1.297
Ainu	.231	.183	.064	.044	.032	.048	1.259	1.445
Amerind	.367	.314	.173	.119	.108	.146	.169	1.293

NOTE.—All values are multiplied by 100. The figures on the diagonal refer to d_x (or d_y), and those above the diagonal d_{xy} . The figures below the diagonal represent the values of $d_A = d_{xy} - (d_x + d_y)/2$.

from the entire human population. These results lend support for a hypothesis of African origin for modern humans (Horai et al. 1995).

The d_A genetic distance (Nei and Miller 1990) matrix for the eight populations compared is also given in table 4. The larger distances were found between Africans and the other populations, and the largest value was observed between Africans and Amerinds. By contrast, the five East Asian populations showed very small distances between them, even reaching zero for the distance between Koreans and Japanese, indicating again a close genetic relationship between the two populations. This suggests that a hybridization must have occurred between the two populations. On the basis of d_A distances, phylogenetic dendrograms (figs. 3 and 4) were constructed by the NJ

method (Saitou and Nei 1987), as well as by the UPGMA method (Nei 1987). In the unrooted network (fig. 3), the five East Asian populations appeared in very close proximity by leaving Africans, Europeans, and Amerinds on the outskirts of the network. This is also conspicuous in the UPGMA tree (fig. 4), in which Africans first diverged from the rest of the populations. Then, the Europeans branched off, and subsequently the Amerinds diverged. Finally, the five East Asian populations branched off and formed a monophyletic cluster (bootstrap probability 74%). In the East Asian cluster, although the initial offshoot remains unclear because of the low bootstrap probability (36%), the Ainu first diverged, followed by the subsequent divergences of Chinese, Ryukyuan (72%), and Korean-Japanese clade (88%). Major features in the phylogenetic analyses shown in figure 3 and figure 4 generally agree with the phylogenetic relationships of human populations obtained by the protein polymorphism (Nei and Livshits 1989; Nei and Roychoudhury 1993) as well as those revealed by the microsatellite DNA polymorphism (Bowcock et al. 1994).

Conclusion and Perspectives

The nucleotide sequences of mtDNA from 293 East Asians sampled in three Japanese populations (mainland Japanese, Ryukyuan, and Ainu) and two populations outside of Japan (Koreans and Chinese) were analyzed. Through extensive analysis of sequence data, we tried to deduce the genetic background of the three Japanese populations and ask how the present Japanese were formed. On the basis of the sequence data from other East Asian populations outside of Japan, we were able to gain insights into the history of the formation of modern Japanese. Although the mainland Japanese shared some degree of genetic affinity with the Ainu and Ryukyuan, who are considered modern descendants of the aboriginal Jomon people, a great majority of the gene pool in the mainland Japanese was derived from

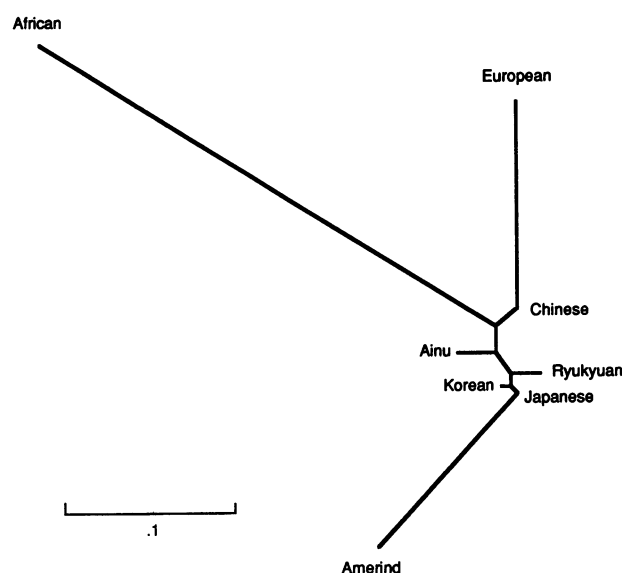


Figure 3 NJ network, showing the relationships of the five East Asian, African, European, and Amerind populations based on d_A ($\times 100$) distances.

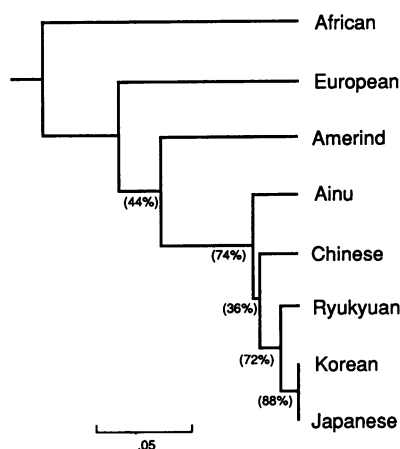


Figure 4 UPGMA phylogenetic tree, showing the relationships of the five East Asian, African, European, and Amerind populations based on d_A ($\times 100$) distances. The number in parenthesis for each interior branch is the bootstrap probability (Felsenstein 1985).

the Asian continent through migrations after the Yayoi Age. Thus, the present results lend support to the hybridization theory on the origin of modern Japanese. Furthermore, the Ainu and Ryukyans, though they shared some genetic affinity with each other, are thought to have existed as different populations when the Yayoi migration began to take place. Phylogenetic analysis of the entire human population revealed a close genetic relationship among East Asian populations. The present study also revealed the unique phylogenetic position of the Ainu, whose genetic origin still remains uncertain. When future studies obtain even more thorough geographic sampling, especially from Southeast Asia and Siberia, we will be able to attain a deeper understanding of the phylogenetic affiliation of the Ainu as modern descendant of the Neolithic Jomon people.

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